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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/938,525	08/27/2001	Kyozo Kobayashi	024015-00002	1018
22850	7590	08/25/2004	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			JACKSON, ANDRE L	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				3677

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/938,525	KOBAYASHI, KYOZO
Examiner	Art Unit	
Andre' L. Jackson	3677	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 June 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 17-24 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 17-24 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 27 August 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/11/2004</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 17-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USPN 6,138,331 to Powers. Powers discloses a seat belt cover comprising;

an outside belt-like member (26) having a top end (27) and a bottom end (25) disposed away from the top end along a longitudinal axis; a left belt-like member (30) having a top (31), bottom (33), connected and fastening ends (36), the left top end disposed away from the left bottom end and the left connected and fastening ends extends between the left top and bottom ends and disposed opposite one another; and a right belt-like member (28) having a top (31), bottom (33), connected and fastening ends (34), the right top end disposed away from the right bottom end and the right connected and fastening ends extends between the right top and bottom ends and disposed opposite one another; the left belt-like member connected end is connected with the right belt-like member connected end via connection edges at 32 of the outside belt-like member along the longitudinal axis, the left belt-like member fastening end is adapted to removably fasten with the right belt-like member fastening end to form a partially closed volume, wherein the right and left belt-like members connection with the outside belt-like member adjacent the bottom end is a first distance from the longitudinal axis and the right and left belt-like members connection with the outside belt-like member adjacent the top end (66) is

a second distance from the longitudinal axis, where the first distance being greater than the second distance.

As to claims 18, 19 and 24, a first cooperating fastener is disposed on the left belt-like member, while a second cooperating fastener is disposed on the right belt-like member, where the fasteners are adapted to fasten with each other to form a partially closed volume. The fasteners can be any of known fastening means in the art including zippers with a set of interlocking teeth (col. 3, lines 46-48 and col. 4, lines 10-13).

Response to Applicant's Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 17-24 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. Accordingly, prior art reference #6,138,331 to Powers made of record on June 18, 2002 has been cited and used to meet the limitations of the above claims, consequently, claims 17-24 are found to be unpatentable over Powers.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andre' L. Jackson whose telephone number is (703) 605-4276. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri. (10 am - 6 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy J. Swann can be reached on (703) 306-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

André L. Jackson
Patent Examiner
AU 3677

ALJ


ROBERT J. SANDY
PRIMARY EXAMINER